

July 19, 2006

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the nation's largest industrial trade association representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states, I urge you to support H.R. 5684, the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Implementation Act.

Passage of this bilateral agreement will help solidify the strong ties that currently exist between the United States and Oman, a key ally in the Middle East, and demonstrate our nation's continued commitment to opening markets around the world. It would also mark an important step toward implementing the Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA), which when taken as a whole would form one of our top ten export markets.

Specifically, this FTA will benefit U.S. manufacturers. Under the accord, all American-made consumer and industrial products would enter Oman duty-free, gaining even greater market share for U.S. manufacturers, who exported nearly \$600 million worth of goods to Oman in 2005. Furthermore, it would solidify Oman's commitment to liberalized trade, regulatory transparency and enforcement of intellectual property rights.

Importantly, 94 percent of the U.S. manufactured goods trade deficit arises from countries with which the United States has no bilateral free trade agreements. The manufactured goods trade deficit with U.S. FTA partners during the January-April 2006 period shrunk for the fourth year in a row.

The NAM's Key Vote Advisory Committee has indicated that votes on the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act will be considered for designation as Key Manufacturing Votes in the NAM voting record for the 109th Congress. Eligibility for the NAM Award for Manufacturing Legislative Excellence will be based on a member's record on Key Manufacturing Votes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jay Timmons
Senior Vice President for Policy
and Government Relations

